659 In
178 many criminal cases, culprits who had sought asylum
[696] from the police of the state by entering a churchyard and sounding the resonant stone bells to announce to the pursuers that they had placed themselves under the protection of the church, were taken away by force, despite the protests of the priests. This so deteriorated some of the temporal power of the church that persons involved in kin bloodfeuds were also no longer safe in
[688] church confines. Conversely, the traditional request of priests to law enforcement agencies of the state to arrest violaters of church rules (e.g. adulterers) now go unheeded except in remote rural areas, and even there such a prisoner is no longer held and sentenced to an
[68] indefinite term on such a charge. Fines and imprisonment for violation of the Sabbath or for working on a saint's day, also are no longer enforceable.

An official extreme in this direction was reached in 1942, when, a year after his victorious return, Emperor Haile Selassie issued a series of decrees stripping the church of all feudal power, and most of its temporal power, except in the town of Aksum. Under these decrees, church land could henceforth be taxed by the state, though the taxes were to be used to administer church maintenance and education; church courts could levy only spiritual penalties, not money fines; the Central Treasury of the state was to administer rents from church lands. All statute-labor ("gabbar") rights of the church over sharecropping peasants living on its former feudal estates were abrogated.

642

x 794 796 262 araqi, and also round, solid wheat discs (Qitta")- the unleavened bread of travelers, expensive when made of wheat.

x 794 781 [782] About midight, the convention proceeds, with the poet intoning the call for the female zar "Shaqit (see table for her characteristics):

Poet: "Dance, round and round, brave one;

Shanqit, we are calling; brave one".

Both men and women clap more fiercely than over, in quick rythm Suddenly the servant woman who had served the latest refreshments stiffens with a jerk, screams, and lets the tray slide from her hand. She is about to be possessed by the female zar of her class and occupation. This "gurri" is infantile in character. The young woman begins to skip about the room like a young goat or an overly gay little girl. She teasingly pokes at the men, again and again, until a few copper coins are given her. When this happens, she jumps high with glee. But a moment later she is back, pouting, demanding some sweets, asking for honey. Given some, she devours it, and dances a victory dance, flipping about on tiptoe. The drumbeat quickens. Finally she falls exhausted, her zar now in full possession of her.

x 794 796 688 There is another hush, awaiting further demonstrations. But there is an unscheduled interlude which reinforces discipline. The woman who had danced the "pagan" gurri had left shortly afterward, ostensibly for a call of nature, but had hot returned until now, far too long an absence without permission. Seeing her enter, Lady Salamtew rises, shouting angrily, walkes toward her and heats her on the upper back with the heavy strap, several times, rather hard. The victim stands with bowed head, not stirring under the punishment, evidently

X 794 realizing that her "zar" had insulted the powerful one of Salamtew.
796
[88] Back on her throne, Lady Salamtew harshly admonishes the audience for dozing, for whispering, for laughing, and some for having taken food and drink during the previous "gurri". This inattentiveness is an insult to her zar, and she threatens to recess the convention if it continues. But then she sugarcoats the threat by calling for another round of refreshments.

[85] Some of the babies in the rear had cried, and were nursed by their mothers. This had also been done by some of the possessed women previously, sometimes within half an hour after the exhausting "gurri". Motherhood and zar devotion evidently did not conflict.

[123] Lady Salamtu used this intermission to send the foreigner word promising "I shall appoint you a zar as your weqabi (protective spirit)". When she saw that he had drunk some of the barley beer which she had ordered to be served on the tablet of her zar. This time she addressed him in the female gender again, just as she had used a male gender in addressing her female devotees. The zars are believed to enjoy playing their game of turning nature upside down.

X 794 About 1A.M., everyone rose, except the poet and the drummer.
535
796 Fresh incense was heaped on the burners. Tired and partly intoxicated members of the audience were shaken awake. For now they were to witness the "fukkara", the individualistic "boasting dance" of Lady Salamtew's zar. It was a spastic bobbing up-and-down dance, similar to the "hotu" dance of warriors. The drum beat faster and
[293] faster, Lady Salamtew seemed to forget her dignity, but still waved her strap, the symbol of her seniority, while the devotees shouted

4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Amhara MP5

business of petitions, and few are without wives. This causes many single women to live here, and when they are old they have another resource, for in this town every Tuesday there is a great market or fair at which three or four hundred persons are brought together; and all the old women and some young ones have measures to measure wheat and salt, and they go to the market to measure and gain their living; they give hospitality to those that sleep there that day, and also take care for them of what remains to be sold for the next market day. There is another reason why there are many women in this town, it is because the men who have plenty of food to eat keep two or three wives; and this is not forbidden to them by the King nor by their magistrates, only by the Church. Every man who has more than one wife does not enter the church, nor does he receive any sacrament: and they hold him to be excommunicated. For a year and a half a nephew of mine and I lodged in the house of a man named Ababitay, and he had three wives still alive and acquaintances of ours, friends in honourable friendship: they said that he had had seven wives and thirty children of them. Nobody forbade them, except the Church, as has been said, which did not give them the benefit of the sacraments; and before our departure, he put away from him, and from intercourse with him, two wives, and remained with one, that is to say, the one he had last, who was the youngest, and already they gave him the sacraments, and he entered the church like anybody else, and as though he had not had more than one wife. On this account there are many women in this town, because the men are well off and are like courtiers: and they take two or three, or more if it pleases them. In this country marriages are not fixed, because they separate for any cause. I saw people married, and was at a marriage which was not in a church, and it was done in this manner. On the open space before some houses they placed a bed-

4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Amhara MP5

they take what they have, and they do not choose to provide more than what they require and is necessary for them. 554

In no part that he went about in were there butchers' shops, except at the Court, and no person of the common people may kill a cow (even though it is his own) without leave from the lord of the country. 253

The people speak the truth little, even when they make oath, unless they swear by the head of the King. They much fear excommunication, and if they are ordered to do something, and that it be to their prejudice, they do it from fear of excommunication. 695 [688]

The oath is administered in this manner. They go to the door of the church with two priests, and they have there incense and embers, and he who has to swear puts his hands upon the church door, and one the priests tells him of the oath to speak the truth, and that if he speaks falsely, that as the lion swallows his prey in the woods, so may his soul be swallowed by the devil; and as the wheat is broken between the stones, so may his bones be ground by the devils; and he who swears, at each thing answers Amen; and as the fire burns wood, so may your soul be burned in the fire of hell and made dust. He says Amen. And this if you do not speak truth; he says Amen. And if you speak truth, may your life be prolonged with honour, and your soul in paradise with the blest. He says Amen. And this ended, he gives his testimony.

He says that the movable feasts, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, are celebrated on the same days and seasons that we celebrate them. The birth of Christ, Circumcision, Epiphany, and other feasts of saints also agree with us, and others not. The year and months begin on the 29th day of August, on which was the beheading of St. John, and the year is of twelve months, and the month of thirty days. When the year is ended, there are five days over, which they call pagomen, which means fulfilment of the year, and in the bissextile year there are six days over; so they keep with us. 796 805

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

the Amhara. Both partners enter the marriage with the full understanding that if they do not get along they will be able to separate without much difficulty, each partner taking half the goods that were accumulated during the marriage as well as the land and other private property each brought into the marriage. Only after several years of married life, which have resulted in children, and probably a separation followed by rapprochement or else divorce and remarriage, is the Amhara defined by his culture as a complete adult, a *mulu sēt* or *mulu saw*.

From Generation to Generation

Through the agency of his family of orientation, then, the Amhara adolescent automatically is prepared for adult work responsibilities and launched into married life. Continuity of the social system, however, also depends on the maintenance of a moral order that transcends the narrow commitments of kinship units. What of those sentiments that should dispose the young Amhara to conform with the more general norms of adult society?

The Abyssinian moral order rests primarily upon two pillars: the profession of Christianity and the institution of respect. These dispositions are firmly implanted during childhood and receive steady reinforcement during the transition to adulthood.

Maintenance of the fasting and dietary laws appears to be the central symbol of Christian identity in Amhara culture. Here again one may discern a pattern of progressively increased inculcation of norms throughout maturation. The taboos against pork and other unclean foods are taught at an early age and supported by references to unclean heathens ever after. More important, the Amhara learns step by step how to chasten his stomach in the traditional way. As soon as he is old enough to observe what goes on in his home, he is aware that meat products are not served to anyone on fasting days. Around the age of seven he begins his first regular fast, which means avoiding all food before noon, by observing the sixteen-day fast of *Felsatā*. The Wednesday and Friday fasts are supposed to be observed following this, though in practice it may be a few more years before the child keeps these weekly fasts regularly. Observance of the most trying fast of all, the eight-week fast of Lent, begins at about the age of fifteen.

At the same time, the adolescent comes increasingly under the jurisdiction of a member of the ordained clergy known as his *nafs abbāt* ("soul-father" or confessor). This is particularly so after marriage, when the young man may either continue to be attached to the soul-father of his own father or else may choose another one for himself. (The wife always takes the soul-father of her husband.) The soul-father serves as an agent of moral control by prescribing penance for his confessants when he learns of such infractions of the Christian rules as breaking the fasts.